

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Currently Amended) A method of automatically configuring a network device, the method comprising the computer-implemented steps of:  
receiving a request from the network device to provide configuration information;  
retrieving a template describing a device configuration, wherein the template comprises symbolic references to one of a plurality of values of one or more parameters that may receive values specific to a particular device;  
wherein each symbolic reference identifies an operation and a list of parameters for that operation;  
retrieving from a repository of the plurality of values, based on the symbolic references, one or more values of parameters specific to the network device;  
and  
creating and storing a device-specific instance of the configuration information based on the template and the values of parameters specific to said network device;  
said configuration information conforming to an Extensible Markup Language Document Type Definition (XML DTD) and comprising one or more XML tags that delimit a beginning and an ending of the configuration information.

2. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:  
testing the device-specific instance of configuration information to determine whether it is well-formed with respect to the XML DTD;  
providing the device-specific instance of configuration information to the network device.

3. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:  
testing the device-specific instance of configuration information to determine whether it is well-formed with respect to the XML DTD;  
providing the device-specific instance of configuration information to the network device over a reliable transport protocol, wherein the network device ensures that all of the configuration information is received by checking the one or

7 more XML tags that delimit a beginning and an ending of configuration  
8 information.

1 4. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in Claim 2, further comprising the step of:  
2 at the network device,  
3 syntax checking only configuration commands of the device-specific instance  
4 of configuration information to determine whether the configuration  
5 commands therein conform to a command language that is understood  
6 by the network device;  
7 applying the device-specific instance of configuration information to the  
8 network device.

1 5. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in Claim 2, further comprising the step of:  
2 at the network device,  
3 syntax checking only configuration commands of the device-specific instance  
4 of configuration information to determine whether the configuration  
5 commands therein conform to a command language that is understood  
6 by the network device;  
7 applying the device-specific instance of configuration information to the  
8 network device;  
9 when a syntax error is detected during the syntax checking step, publishing an  
10 event that reports the syntax error using an event service.

1 6. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:  
2 providing the device-specific instance of configuration information to a plurality of  
3 network devices;  
4 at one of the network devices, syntax checking only configuration commands of the  
5 device-specific instance of configuration information to determine whether the  
6 configuration commands therein conform to a command language that is  
7 understood by the network device;

8 upon successful syntax checking, generating an event to an event service to which the  
9 plurality of network devices subscribe, wherein the event announces that the  
10 configuration commands conform to correct syntax;  
11 in response to receiving the event, applying the device-specific instance of  
12 configuration information to the network devices concurrently.

1 7. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:  
2 providing the device-specific instance of configuration information to a plurality of  
3 network devices;  
4 upon successfully receiving the device-specific instance of configuration information  
5 at one of the network devices, generating an event to an event service to  
6 which the plurality of network devices subscribe;  
7 in response to receiving the event, applying the device-specific instance of  
8 configuration information to the network devices concurrently.

1 8. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:  
2 applying the device-specific instance of configuration information to the network  
3 device;  
4 receiving a user request to cancel application of the configuration information;  
5 restoring the network device to its state prior to application of the device-specific  
6 instance of configuration information.

1 9. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 1, wherein the step of receiving a request from the  
2 network device to provide configuration information comprises the step of receiving  
3 an HTTP request that identifies a configuration service that can provide the  
4 configuration information and that includes a unique identifier of the network device.

1 10. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 1, wherein the step of receiving a request from  
2 the network device to provide configuration information comprises the step of  
3 receiving an HTTP request that identifies an Active Server Page of a configuration

4 service that can provide the configuration information and that includes a unique  
5 identifier of the network device.

1 11. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 1, wherein the step of receiving a request from  
2 the network device to provide configuration information comprises the step of  
3 receiving an HTTP request that identifies a Java® Servlet of a configuration service  
4 that can provide the configuration information and that includes a unique identifier of  
5 the network device.

1 12. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in Claim 1, wherein the step of receiving one  
2 or more values of parameters specific to the network device comprises the step of  
3 retrieving a container object associated with the network device from a directory in a  
4 directory service and obtaining the values of parameters from directory objects  
5 contained within the container object.

1 13. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in Claim 1, wherein the step of retrieving a  
2 template comprises the steps of:  
3 retrieving a reference to a template describing the configuration information from a  
4 directory service;  
5 retrieving the template from a configuration server based on the retrieved reference,  
6 wherein the template comprises symbolic reference to one or more parameters  
7 that may receive values specific to a particular device, and wherein the step of  
8 receiving one or more values of parameters specific to the network device  
9 comprises the step of retrieving a container object associated with the network  
10 device from a directory in a directory service and obtaining the values of  
11 parameters from directory objects contained within the container object.

1 14. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in Claim 5, wherein the step of syntax  
2 checking additionally comprises parsing one or more configuration commands from  
3 the device-specific instance of configuration information using a parser of an  
4 operating system that is executed by the network device.

1 15. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:  
2 determining that a partial configuration should be sent to one or more network  
3 devices;  
4 based on the template and the one or more values of parameters specific to the  
5 network device, creating and storing a device-specific instance of the partial  
6 configuration based on the template and the values of parameters and  
7 conforming to an Extensible Markup Language Document Type Definition  
8 (XML DTD), comprising one or more XML tags that delimit the partial  
9 configuration;  
10 publishing the partial configuration to an event service that is communicatively  
11 coupled to the one or more network devices.

1 16. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:  
2 determining that a partial configuration should be sent to one or more network  
3 devices;  
4 based on the template and the one or more values of parameters specific to the  
5 network device, creating and storing a device-specific instance of the partial  
6 configuration based on the template and the values of parameters and  
7 conforming to an Extensible Markup Language Document Type Definition  
8 (XML DTD), comprising one or more XML tags that delimit the partial  
9 configuration;  
10 publishing a partial configuration trigger event to an event service that is  
11 communicatively coupled to the one or more network devices; and  
12 providing the partial configuration to one or more network devices in response to  
13 requests therefrom that are received in response to the trigger event.

1 17. (Currently Amended) A method of automatically configuring a network device, the  
2 method comprising the computer-implemented steps of:  
3 generating a request to provide configuration information;

4 receiving a set of configuration information conforming to an Extensible Markup  
5 Language Document Type Definition (XML DTD), the configuration  
6 information comprising one or more XML tags that delimit a beginning and  
7 an end of the configuration information, said set of configuration information  
8 based on a template describing a device configuration that is instantiated with  
9 one or more ~~parameter~~ values of parameters that are specific to the network  
10 device;

11 wherein the template comprises symbolic references to one of a plurality of values of  
12 one or more parameters that may receive values specific to a particular device,  
13 wherein each symbolic reference identifies an operation and a list of  
14 parameters for that operation;

15 syntax checking only configuration commands of the set of configuration information  
16 to determine whether the configuration commands therein conform to a  
17 command language that is understood by the network device; and  
18 applying the configuration information to the network device.

1 18. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in Claim 17, wherein the set of configuration  
2 information is received concurrently at a plurality of network devices, and further  
3 comprising the steps of:

4 at one of the network devices, syntax checking only configuration commands of the  
5 set of configuration information to determine whether the configuration  
6 commands therein conform to a command language that is understood by the  
7 network device;

8 upon successful syntax checking, generating a status event to an event service to  
9 which the plurality of network devices subscribe, wherein the status event  
10 announces that the set of configuration commands conform to correct syntax;  
11 in response to receiving a "write" event, applying the set of configuration information  
12 to the network device.

1 19. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 17, wherein the step of generating a request to  
2 provide configuration information comprises the step of generating an HTTP request

3 that identifies a configuration service that can provide the configuration information  
4 and that includes a unique identifier of the network device.

1 20. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 17, wherein the step of generating a request to  
2 provide configuration information comprises the step of generating an HTTP request  
3 that identifies an Active Server Page of a configuration service that can provide the  
4 configuration information and that includes a unique identifier of the network device.

1 21. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 17, wherein the step of generating a request to  
2 provide configuration information comprises the step of generating an HTTP request  
3 that identifies a Java® Servlet of a configuration service that can provide the  
4 configuration information and that includes a unique identifier of the network device.

1 22. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in Claim 17, wherein the step of receiving a  
2 set of configuration information comprises the steps of, at a configuration server,  
3 receiving [[a]] the template describing the device configuration from a directory  
4 service, ~~wherein the template comprises symbolic references to one or more~~  
5 ~~parameters that may receive values specific to a particular device, and wherein~~  
6 receiving said one or more values of parameters specific to the network device  
7 comprises retrieving a container object associated with the network device from a  
8 directory in a directory service and obtaining the values of parameters from directory  
9 objects contained within the container object.

1 23. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in Claim 17, wherein the step of syntax  
2 checking comprises applying the configuration commands of the set of configuration  
3 information to a parser of an operating system that is executed by the network device.

1 24. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for automatically configuring a network device,  
2 comprising:  
3 a configuration service configured for carrying out the steps of:

4 receiving, from a configuration agent executed by the network device, a  
5 request to provide configuration information;  
6 retrieving a template describing a device configuration, wherein the template  
7 comprises symbolic reference to one of a plurality of values of one or  
8 more parameters that may be resolved into values specific to a  
9 particular device;  
10 wherein each symbolic reference identifies an operation and a list of  
11 parameters for that operation;  
12 retrieving from a repository of the plurality of values, based on the symbolic  
13 references, one or more values of parameters specific to the network  
14 device;  
15 creating and storing a device-specific instance of the configuration  
16 information based on the template and the values of parameters  
17 specific to said network device and conforming to an Extensible  
18 Markup Language Document Type Definition (XML DTD),  
19 comprising one or more XML tags that delimit the configuration  
20 information, including at least one pair of XML tags that delimit a  
21 beginning and an end of the configuration information.

1 25. (Currently Amended) An apparatus as recited in Claim 24, further comprising:  
2 one or more configuration templates stored in a directory service, wherein each of the  
3 configuration templates comprises an object in the directory service that  
4 describes a configuration, ~~and wherein the template comprises symbolic~~  
5 ~~reference to one or more parameters that may receive values specific to a~~  
6 ~~particular device;~~  
7 one or more container objects stored in the directory service and associated with the  
8 network device, each of the container objects comprising values for the one or  
9 more parameters in one of the configuration templates that corresponds to the  
10 network device.



1 26. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium carrying one or more sequences of  
2 instructions for automatically configuring a network device, which instructions, when  
3 executed by one or more processors, cause the one or more processors to carry out the  
4 steps of:  
5 receiving a request from the network device to provide configuration information;  
6 retrieving a template describing a device configuration, wherein the template  
7 comprises symbolic references to one of a plurality of values of one or more  
8 parameters that may be resolved into values specific to a particular device;  
9 wherein each symbolic reference identifies an operation and a list of parameters for  
10 that operation;  
11 retrieving from a repository of the plurality of values, based on the symbolic  
12 references, one or more values of parameters specific to the network device;  
13 creating and storing a device-specific instance of the configuration information based  
14 on the template and the values of parameters specific to said network device  
15 and conforming to an Extensible Markup Language Document Type  
16 Definition (XML DTD), comprising one or more XML tags that delimit the  
17 configuration information, including at least one pair of XML tags that delimit  
18 a beginning and an end of the configuration information.

1 27. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for automatically configuring a network device,  
2 comprising:  
3 means for receiving a request from the network device to provide configuration  
4 information;  
5 means for retrieving a template describing a device configuration, wherein the  
6 template comprises symbolic references to one of a plurality of values of one  
7 or more parameters that may be resolved into values specific to a particular  
8 device;  
9 wherein each symbolic reference identifies an operation and a list of parameters for  
10 that operation;

11 means for retrieving from a repository of the plurality of values, based on the  
12 symbolic references, one or more values of parameters specific to the network  
13 device;

14 means for creating and storing a device-specific instance of the configuration  
15 information based on the template and the values of parameters specific to  
16 said network device and conforming to an Extensible Markup Language  
17 Document Type Definition (XML DTD), comprising one or more XML tags  
18 that delimit the configuration information, including at least one pair of XML  
19 tags that delimit a beginning and an end of the configuration information.

1 28. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for automatically configuring a network device,  
2 comprising:  
3 a network interface that is coupled to a data network for receiving one or more packet  
4 flows therefrom;  
5 a processor;  
6 one or more stored sequences of instructions which, when executed by the processor,  
7 cause the processor to carry out the steps of:  
8 generating a request to provide configuration information;  
9 retrieving a set of configuration information conforming to an Extensible  
10 Markup Language Document Type Definition (XML DTD), the  
11 configuration information comprising one or more XML tags that  
12 delimit a beginning and an end of the configuration information, based  
13 on a template describing a device configuration that is instantiated  
14 with one or more ~~parameter~~ values of parameters that are specific to  
15 the network device;  
16 wherein the template comprises symbolic references to one of a plurality of  
17 values of one or more parameters that may receive values specific to a  
18 particular device, wherein each symbolic reference identifies an  
19 operation and a list of parameters for that operation;  
20 syntax checking only configuration commands of the set of configuration  
21 information to determine whether the configuration commands therein

22 conform to a command language that is understood by the network  
23 device; and  
24 applying the configuration information to the network device.

1 29. (Canceled)

1 30. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for automatically configuring a network device,  
2 comprising:  
3 a configuration agent executed by the network device and configured for carrying out  
4 the steps of:  
5 generating a request to provide configuration information;  
6 receiving a device-specific instance of configuration information based on a  
7 template describing a device configuration, wherein the template  
8 comprises symbolic references to one of a plurality of values of one or  
9 more parameters that may be resolved into values specific to a  
10 particular device, and based on one or more values of parameters  
11 specific to the device that are retrieved from a repository based on the  
12 symbolic references, and wherein the template conforms to an  
13 Extensible Markup Language Document Type Definition (XML  
14 DTD), comprising one or more XML tags that delimit a beginning and  
15 an end of the configuration information, wherein each symbolic  
16 reference identifies an operation and a list of parameters for that  
17 operation; and  
18 applying the device-specific instance of configuration information to the  
19 network device to result in re-configuring the network device in  
20 accordance with the template.

1 31. (Currently Amended) An apparatus as recited in Claim 30, further comprising:  
2 one or more configuration templates stored in a directory service, wherein each of the  
3 configuration templates comprises an object in the directory service that  
4 describes the device configuration, ~~and wherein the template comprises~~

~~symbolic reference to one or more parameters that may receive values specific to a particular device;~~

one or more container objects stored in the directory service and associated with the network device, each of the container objects comprising values for the one or more parameters in one of the configuration templates that corresponds to the network device.

32. (Currently Amended) A method of automatically configuring a computer program application that uses information about network devices or topology in order to operate in a network environment, comprising the steps of:  
receiving a request for network topology information from the computer program application;  
retrieving a template of network topology information from a repository;  
wherein the template comprises symbolic references to one of a plurality of values of one or more parameters that may receive values specific to a particular element of the topology;  
resolving elements of the topology into application-specific values, resulting in creating and storing resolved topology information; and  
providing the resolved network topology information to a configuration agent within the application that is configured to re-configure the computer program application to operate with the resolved network topology.

33. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 32, wherein resolving elements of the topology includes the step of carrying out application-specific syntax checking of elements of the template.